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INFO RUEHXX/GENEVA IO MISSIONS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
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RUCNNAR/VIENNA NARCOTICS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHSW/AMEMBASSY BERN IMMEDIATE 0220
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE 0765
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 1302
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE 0001
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE 1172
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 1797
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE 0335
RUEHRN/USMISSION UN ROME IMMEDIATE 0080

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 UNVIE VIENNA 000537

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR IO/T, EB/IFT/ODF AND L/PIL
EMBASSIES FOR ECON/POL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/27/2023

TAGS: [KUNR](#) [ETRD](#) [EIND](#) [EAID](#) [UNIDO](#) [UNDP](#) [UNEP](#) [AORC](#) [KGHG](#)

IR

SUBJECT: IRAN TO PRESIDE AS PRESIDENT OF UNIDO GENERAL
CONFERENCE

REF: UNVIE 440

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Classified By: Ambassador Glyn T. Davies for reasons (b) and (e)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Nominated by Asia Group without objection, Iranian Ambassador Ali Asghar Soltanieh is poised to be elected by acclamation at the upcoming December 7-11 UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) General Conference. Along with Iran's upcoming chairmanship of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), Ambassador Soltanieh is increasingly putting himself into positions of interest and visibility in the Vienna-based IOs. These leadership positions may be aimed at balancing Iran's activities in Vienna to reduce pressure on Iran for its nuclear portfolio.
END SUMMARY

Soltanieh Finds Another Vienna
Leadership Position

¶2. (U) UNIDO's General Conference, held every two years, brings together leaders from around the world to discuss issues surrounding the promotion and acceleration of sustainable industrial development in developing countries and economies in transition. (Ref). The General conference provides UNIDO with policy direction and approval of the budget. This year's theme is "Greening Industry for Global Recovery and Growth." The President of the General Conference, elected (usually by acclamation) at the beginning of the conference, oversees administrative and management issues related to the agenda. The President is assisted by eight vice-presidents, also chosen from regional groups. This year, the GC presidency belonged to the Asia group, who nominated-without objection according to UNIDO interlocutors-Iranian Ambassador Ali Asghar Soltanieh. Various European interlocutors state they fully expect Soltanieh to be elected by acclamation.

COMMENT

13. (C) While the U.S. is not a member to UNIDO, we do provide voluntary funding to some of its technical assistance activities in the world. As such, Mission endeavors to monitor UNIDO's ongoing (and impressive) reforms and implementation of its strategic priorities. Soltanieh's likely election to the GC Presidency is a telling illustration of his active approach to multilateral diplomacy, and Iran's intent to become more enmeshed in the leadership of key Vienna-based IOs. Iran's increasing interest in these organizations is almost certainly part of its broader goal of reaching out to states across the world to reduce pressure on Iran over its nuclear activities as well as to increase the general prestige of the Islamic Republic as the leader of the Muslim world and developing nations. Ambassador Soltanieh has a more pleasant demeanor in non-nuclear meetings and is generally regarded as helpful in the UNODC forum, including by UNVIE officers, thus he may be successful in gaining some allies more generally.

14. (C) Aside from its role in the NAM troika, Iran already claims leadership in the IAEA Board of Governors as the defender of states' rights to peaceful nuclear programs and repeatedly has argued that international organizations need to be retooled to take account of the concerns of a broader swath of countries and wrested from the hands of the West. We expect Iran might make a bid to become a member of the Board of Governors as well, but assess that Iran's continued noncompliance with the IAEA will prevent its accession. Part of this drive by Iran no doubt is due to Soltanieh's personal interest in being a recognized and popular front man for the Islamic Republic.

15. (C) Mission will continue to monitor Iran's participation

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in these organizations and will advise Washington of any opportunities for engagement should the USG choose to pursue such an approach in these Vienna fora. END COMMENT

DAVIES